

130. Admission of all Hindus into Sirkar temples.

Mr. C. V. Kunjuraman (Member, Nominated) began by thanking the Government for allowing the discussion of the question of entry into temples this year as a special case. The subject in question was not connected with religion but was social. Ezhavas were admitting Pulayas and Parayas into their temple at Sivagiri and their claim to enter Sirkar temples was legitimate. Untouchability was at the root of his community being denied the right of entering Sirkar temples. There was no question of untouchability in the Assembly Hall, in the Colleges or in the Public Offices. Its application to the temples was based on prejudice and superstition. His Highness the Maha Raja Gackwar of Baroda had issued a Proclamation in favour of entry into public temples by all classes. The Travancore Government themselves allowed Chakkala Nairs admission into the temples some six years back. The enlightened members of the caste Hindu communities also favoured the aspirations of the Ezhavas in this matter as evidenced by the large number of signatories to the memorial presented by Mr. Padmanabha Pillai of Changanacheri. Ezhavas had a right to enter the temples even if it was decided that the position of the Government in respect of them was only that of a trustee, because the Oorallars who managed the temples in the past were only the representatives of all the Hindus in the village and not of caste Hindus alone.

In the circumstances, the Member requested that the institution of untouchability be removed and that Ezhavas be given access to all public temples in the State.

Mr. T. K. Kittan (Member, Nominated) endorsed the views given expression to by Mr. C. V. Kunjuraman in all that he said regarding the admission of all Hindus into Sirkar temples. The Ezhava community felt the evil effects of the system of caste more poignantly than other depressed classes. They were making headway in material progress in spite of many obstacles. The community was really suffering considerable hardship from the institution of unapproachability rigidly kept alive in north Travancore which prevented them from using the public roads and schools situated near temples. If entry into temples was allowed to them, their grievance in the matter of untouchability would be completely removed. Students belonging to all castes were freely associating with one another in all public educational institutions. The Member prayed that this principle might be extended a little further and the members of his community be permitted to enter all Sirkar temples for worship. He added that, in the temples belonging to his community, Pulayas, Parayas and other classes were being freely admitted. The members of the higher classes were also sympathising with them in their request for admission into the temples. No doubt their representation was not susceptible of an immediate answer, but it should receive the sympathetic consideration of Government.

Dewan's reply.—I am glad that the Members recognise that this is a matter which does not admit of an immediate answer, and I see that you want only a considered reply. A considered reply will be given in due course.

131. Report of the Devaswom Separation Committee and Devaswoms under the management of Government.

Mr. Trivikramar Vasudevar (Member, Jenmi, Padmanabhapuram Division) said that the separation of Devaswoms from the Land Revenue Department was an important subject and that, in view of the fact that the Devaswoms were first assumed by a Christian Dewan and that there were only two Hindu members on the Devaswom Separation Committee, the orders of Government had to be passed after careful consideration and on such lines as would satisfy the aspirations of all the communities concerned. The intentions of the founders of the institutions should not be ignored, nor should the promises given by Government be violated. The trust property in the hands of the Government should be now separated. As regards the question of throwing open the temples to all classes of people for purposes of worship, the Member said that it was governed by long-standing custom and usage